C10

Alternatives to State-Sponsored Security in Areas of Extremely Limited Statehood: the Central African Republic and South Sudan

SFB 700 **Governance** in areas of limited statehood

Contact: andreas.mehler@giga-hamburg.de

Research Questions

The research investigates how local, national and international (non-state) actors govern and secure areas of extremely limited state presence.
Why are some areas with only limited statehood engulfed in constant conflict, while other such areas are able to produce lasting stability?
Who are the state and non-state actors that engage in alternative security provision and are they legitimate?

Project Team

Lotje de Vries
Post-Doc

Tim Glawion

Implementation

Since late 2013, headlines on South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR) tell us stories of rebellion, displacement and ethnic or religious fighting. State authorities are wholly incapable of keeping the situation under control. In South Sudan the president called in help of the Ugandan army and in the CAR several international peacekeeping operations fail to restore law and order. However, while some areas in the two countries have plunged into chaos, others are calm and have been so for years.

Although it may seem that the two countries fractured suddenly in late 2013, a closer look reveals histories of economic disintegration, lack of social and political cohesion and fluid loyalties of men in arms. Both countries have large pockets where the state is virtually absent and as a consequence other actors have stepped in to govern and provide security. The scope and impact of these alternatives to state-sponsored security lay at the center of this research project.

Methods

The project is anchored in extensive fieldwork in both countries, combining a mix of qualitative methods: focus group discussions, *actor mapping*, elite interviews, event logs and non-participatory observation. Fieldwork focuses on local arenas of security production in which actors such as local administrators, organized forces, international *peacekeepers*, customary authorities, *vigilantes*, as well as criminal and rebel organizations may play a role.
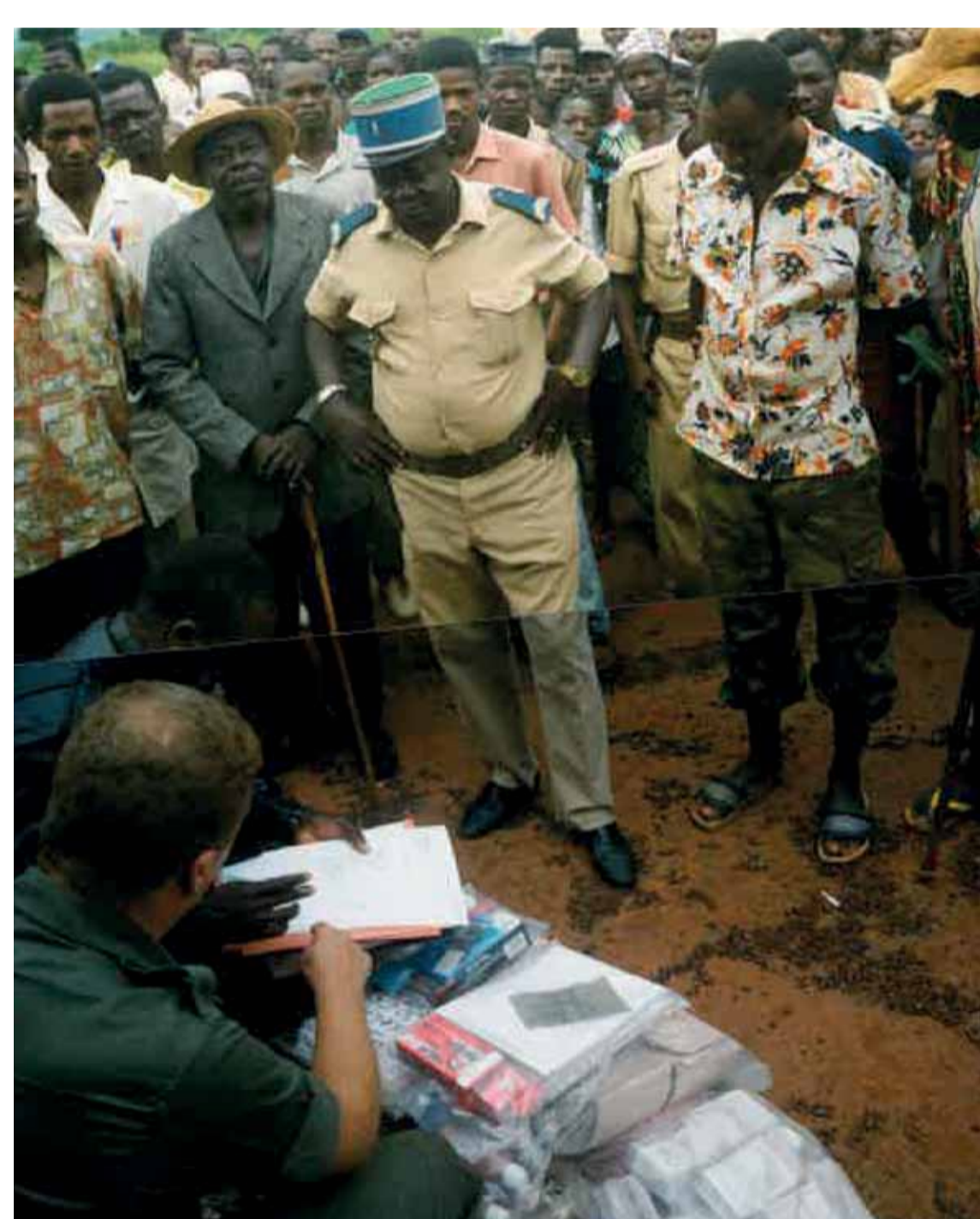
Hypotheses

We propose three broad hypotheses focusing on the institutional (1), social (2) and spatial (3) aspects of the research:

1. Hierarchically structured actor constellations are most effective in providing security and local security provision is particularly volatile when relative claims to power between significant security actors are unresolved.

2. Ethnic, religious and/or social homogeneity provide important preconditions for trust and social capital at the local level.

3. State tasks—such as providing security—vary with socio-spatial distance of the region to the capital; core functions are fulfilled within a close perimeter to the capital. Simultaneously, local self-management improves with increasing socio-spatial distance to the capital/national decision-making centers.

Contribution to the SFB 700

Project C10 researches local conditions for governance pertaining physical security. The project analyses select conditions for effective security governance: institutional design, actor constellations, external "shadows of hierarchy," legitimacy, and social trust.

DFG Collaborative Research Center (SFB) 700

www.sfb-governance.com

Freie Universität Berlin · Universität Potsdam · GIGA German Institute of Global and Area Studies Leibniz-Institut für Globale und Regionale Studien · SWP Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik German Institute for International and Security Affairs · WZB Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin für Sozialforschung